The Cleveland Museum of Art

Press Release

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MAJOR NEOCLASSICAL MARBLE, RARE KOREAN SCULPTURE, OTHER RECENT CMA ACQUISITIONS NOW ON VIEW

(**Cleveland, OH**) Two of the most important sculptures to enter the Cleveland Museum of Art's collection in recent years—one from the West and one from the East—are on view for the next two months in the museum's recent acquisitions galleries. The life-sized marble sculpture by the American expatriate who worked in Rome, Harriet Goodhue Hosmer (1830-1908), of *The Sleeping Faun* is the museum's first major American marble neoclassical sculpture. An extremely rare Korean Buddhist figure in gilded wood from the 14th century joins another Koryŏ period sculpture acquired in 1995 to make the only pair of such classical Buddhist sculptures known to be in one collection outside Korea. In addition, a major photography acquisition, a 12-piece "typology" the museum commissioned of Bernd and Hilla Becher featuring images of Ohio blast furnaces, is temporarily installed in the museum's contemporary galleries.

Museum director Robert P. Bergman commented on the recent acquisitions: "It's a privilege to play a role in again bringing to Cleveland an extraordinary range of superb works of art created around the world. In particular, it's a pleasure to establish the museum's small, growing collection of Korean art as one of the finest in the western world." Also on view in the recent acquisitions galleries: yet another sculpture, an abstract work by Romanian-born Cleveland artist David Davis; a 13th-century French miniature painting newly added to the museum's fine collection of manuscript leaves; a Rembrandt etching of a female nude; three pre-Columbian ceramics; an Indian miniature painting; and a portrait in chalk by pre-Raphaelite artist Frederick Augustus Sandys.

Hosmer's *The Sleeping Faun* is an engaging work of white stone, showing an almost nude young man reclining against a tree stump, to which a mischievous child satyr ties his lion skin garment. Nearby there are grapes, a lizard, a wooden staff, and panpipes. By the time Hosmer created this work (modeled 1864, carved after 1865), the Massachusetts native had already won international acclaim for small-scale genre sculpture as well as monumental works. Two other large-scale marble versions of *The Sleeping Faun* are known to exist in collections in the British Isles. The Cleveland example is presumed to be the one acquired first by the Prince of Wales, the future

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Edward VII, in the 1870s. It has recently been in the collection of Christopher Forbes. It will be placed on view near a gallery devoted to the Cleveland museum's representative group of works by American and British painters who, like Hosmer, sought inspiration from Italy's unique blend of surviving remnants of ancient Roman culture and contemporary efforts to revive its style.

The artist of the museum's newly acquired Korean wood sculpture lived at a time when great religious art was at its height in Korea, namely the Koryŏ period of the 10th through 14th centuries. The Koryŏ era looms larger in importance in art history as its vestiges—some in Japan and some in the West—emerge, and as greater understanding evolves of Korea's unique contributions to Asian culture. Currently, fewer than a dozen Koryŏ period wood sculptures are known. This standing figure is made of two main pieces of carved wood joined bilaterally, lacquered and gilded. Its identity and meaning remain mysterious, particularly since the hands, which provide key clues in Buddhist iconography, appear to be replacements. Unique in this example is the artist's addition of metalwork earrings that once held precious stones or crystal. The figure's modest size (just over 19 inches tall) suggests its use in private devotion rather than in a large temple setting. (Two years ago the museum acquired a 14th-century seated Amit'a Buddha of similar scale.) Six Korean ceramic vessels from the 3rd to 6th centuries were also just now acquired.

The museum has long desired to add a work by the German husband-and-wife photography team of Bernd and Hilla Becher. During their 37-year collaboration, the Bechers have traveled the world documenting modern industrial structures with archaeological thoroughness. The museum ultimately approached the Bechers to make a "typology"—one of the pair's distinctive grids of related images—that would relate to the museum's region, to be drawn from their large inventory of images of huge, gnarled structures of blast furnace heads taken during numerous trips to the American Midwest. They chose a set of twelve images of blast furnaces in Cleveland, Youngstown, Mingo Junction, and Steubenville, Ohio; Aliquippa, Pennsylvania; and Weirton, West Virginia. Typical of the Bechers' style, all were taken from an elevated vantage point on relatively shadowless days, and are tightly cropped with no reference to human life or specific identity. *Blast Furnaces, Ohio* joins other multiple-unit contemporary photographs by Hiroshi Sugimoto, Richard Long, and Gilbert and George.

Already one of the finest in the United States, the museum's collection of medieval manuscript leaves now has added a very unusual and high-quality example. The museum's painting in tempera on vellum is from a luxury manuscript (perhaps a life of St. Catherine or a compendium of saints' lives) created for an important patron. This miniature and the famous Ingeborg Psalter (Chantilly, Musée Conde) are among the most significant paintings preserved from a brief moment in the history of painting ca. AD 1200 on the cusp between the Romanesque and Gothic styles—a period well-represented in *date* in the museum's medieval collection but

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not in this *style*, characterized in manuscript painting and in other media by a soft and supple quality of drapery. The image depicts a scene in which the martyr was required to debate the faith with fifty pagan philosphers, all of whom became converts to Christianity.

Other significant acquisitions:

- The museum's collection of Rembrandt prints has long had fine examples of the subjects that interested the Old Master most—portraits, landscapes, and biblical and genre scenes—but until now has been without a superb example of a female nude. *Woman Bathing Her Feet in a Brook* is one of his late works (1658), the culmination of three decades of studying the human form, here articulated in the subtlest play of light and shadow and printed on beige-toned Japanese paper. It comes from the renowned collection of the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth.
- *The Coral Necklace* is a portrait in black, brown, and red chalk (1871) by Pre-Raphaelite artist Frederick Augustus Sandys. Considered one of the the greatest draftsmen of his time, Sandys drew this dreamy, romantic image of his common law wife, the actress Mary Jones.
- Important pre-Columbian ceramics include the ten-inch-high earthenware *Masked Dignitary in a Litter* from the Wari culture, whose sphere of influence in AD 500-900 extended well beyond its homeland in the central highlands of Peru. A *Severed Head Effigy Vessel* (Peru, ca. 200 BC-AD 100) is the first Early Nazca pot to enter the collection. A *Fox Effigy Vessel* (Pataky Polychrome, ca. AD 1200-1400) will be placed on permanent view with other Costa Rican, Panamanian and Colombian material in a gallery newly devoted to expansion of the museum's pre-Columbian installation.
- Among a number of gifts entering the museum's collection are a sculpture in wood and aluminum from David Davis's *Growth Band* series, given by the artist; and an Indian miniature painting (ca. 1690-1710) from the extensive manuscript known as the "Shangri" Ramayana, given by trustee Dr. Norman Zaworski in honor of retired museum director Sherman E. Lee and his wife, Ruth Lee.
- Also added to the print collection: *Sainte Sebastienne*, a drypoint by Louise Bourgeois (1992); in it the artist transforms the traditional image of the 3rd-century Christian martyr into a feminist martyr; and a wood engraving by Aristide Maillol of a female nude, *The Wave (La Vague)*, from 1895, reflecting the influence of Japanese prints on French art of the time.

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